

Octagon House
Johnsonburg
Warren County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

Octagon House
Johnsonburg
Warren County, New Jersey

Owner and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Earl L. Huff

Date of Erection: 1853

Architect: Unknown

Builder: John C. Gibbs (original owner)

Present Condition: Original, well maintained

Number of Storeys: Two over cellar

Materials of Construction

Foundation: Stone masonry

Exterior walls: Stone masonry with stuccoed face

Interior walls: Lath and plaster on frames studding

Chimneys: Brick, in center of house and in end wall of wing

Roof: Octahedral, corrugated sheetiron-covered

Historical Data:

The identity of the original owner of this remarkable octagonal plan house as above stated is discovered by search of title to the property in the County records.

Thus, it is found that having by deed of 4 April 1851 purchased a 6.26 acre tract from one James L. Bartow, the Rev. John S. Maxwell (a) and wife Lucy, of Frelinghuysen Township, Warren County, sold 1.18 acres thereof to a certain John C. Gibbs of same place, for \$50. The lot thereby conveyed was described therein as lying in Frelinghuysen Township, "Beginning at a corner in the public road leading from Johnsonburg to Greenville and is on a course of north 39 degrees west 67 links from the west corner of a new House

(a) The Rev. John S. Maxwell, 4 years pastor of the Christian Church erected 1848 in the southern part of Johnsonburg. This village was originally known as Log Gaol for that building erected there in the then seat of Sussex County 1753 (Jas. P. Snell, History of Sussex and Warren Counties, N. J., 188., p.p. 680 and 690)

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the said Gibbs is now building and which is on the lot now being described, in the village of Johnsonburg", thence South $11\frac{1}{2}$ degrees east 3.67 chains, north $77\frac{1}{2}$ degrees east 3.13, north $5\frac{1}{4}$ degrees west 3.50 to a corner in the said road, and south $80\frac{3}{4}$ degrees west 3.49 to the place of beginning.

Subsequently, by deed of 27 May 1876, John C. Gibbs abovenamed, conveyed to Jesse Anthony, both being of Frelinghuysen Township, for \$500 the same 1.18 acre lot describing it at "Beginning at a corner in the public road leading out of Johnsonburg towards Greenville by way of the Dark Moon, and is on a course of north 39 degrees west 67 links from the west corner of the House wherein the said Gibbs resides, which stands upon the premises".

Jesse Anthony, the grantee, retained possession of the property and by his will dated 5 December 1894 and proved 26 May 1904, devised all his real estate in Johnsonburg to Emma V. Harding, and she as Emma V. Hart, widow (nee Harding), of Roxbury Township, Morris County, sold to Hans Billows and wife Mary of Frelinghuysen Township, Warren County, for \$500, three adjacent lots in Johnsonburg abovesaid, (no. 2 of which is the one here considered) comprising some 4.68 acres. From Billows and wife the same passed by deed of 3 August 1939 to Earl L. Huff and wife Margaret, all of Frelinghuysen Township (in which Johnsonburg is located) who remain as owners and occupants at the time of our survey of the house in 1937.

Another example of the house built on this octagonal plan is the brick one in Hackettstown, same County, owned by Mr. John Sherrer in 1937.

Reference:

Search of title in Land and Probate records of Warren County by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. Abstractor, reported 12 July 1940.

Lewis X. Cook

Supervising Historian 17 March 1941

Apparel

Seymour Williams

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District Officer Rahway, New Jersey